

## **Department of Military and Veterans Affairs**

1. How do you view your role in the state's emergency management network?
2. How do you view the department's role in assisting local communities affected by military base closings?
3. What steps will you take to insure recruitment and retention goals are met?
4. What role do you expect the Michigan National Guard to play in the possible war with Iraq?
5. What are your thoughts on proposals for a new home for the Department of Military Affairs? Do you support the project currently under discussion? Why or why not?
6. What efforts will you make to try and increase the department's federal funding from Washington, DC?
7. What are your thoughts on the department's Challenge Program for at-risk youths? Do you see that being continued?
8. What are your thoughts on the department's tuition reimbursement program? Has that program met your expectations?

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**Department of Military & Veterans Affairs**

Maj Gen (S) Thomas G. Cutler

**1. How do you view your role in the state's emergency management network?**

*I serve as the Governor's primary advisor regarding the appropriate use of National Guard assets and personnel. I would serve as the Senior Commander of personnel ordered to State Active Duty in any state of emergency situation.*

**2. How do you view the department's role in assisting local communities affected by military base closings?**

*The closing of a military base would be an action initiated by appropriate federal authorities. The department would first work to assist the community in evaluating and responding to a proposed base closing. If a decision is ultimately made to close a base, the department would work with federal, state, and local agencies to develop a closure plan that would minimize any adverse impact of a base closure. The department would also work with these same agencies as they seek to positively re-utilize base assets, utilizing the Wurtsmith AFB closure plan as a model.*

**3. What steps will you take to insure recruitment and retention goals are met?**

*Recruiting and retention goals will be met by continuing to support initiatives in three areas; effective advertising, recruiting and retention incentives, and effective and meaningful utilization of those serving.*

**4. What role do you expect the Michigan National Guard to play in the possible war with Iraq?**

*The Michigan National Guard is prepared to respond to any tasking required by our senior military leadership, if a war should occur. The most likely tasking will be that of support personnel, such as security personnel from both the Army and Air Guard.*

**5. What are your thoughts on proposals for a new home for the Department of Military Affairs? Do you support the project currently under discussion? Why or why not?**

*The DMVA is building a new facility near the Capital City Airport outside Lansing to house our military readiness function. We also need a facility to house and support the department's personnel and operational requirements. Our research suggests that DMVA requirements could be met by adding square footage to the facility that will be located at the airport. This location serves DMVA security requirements, would consolidate all of our operations, and would require the least investment at the state level.*

**6. What efforts will you make to try and increase the department's federal funding from Washington, DC?**

*I will continue to work with our senior military leadership, our elected representatives at the federal level and the Governor's Washington office, to maximize federal investment in our facilities and operations. There are some areas that do require shared state/federal funding and I will continue to review these requirements to ensure effective use of state funds.*

**7. What are your thoughts on the department's Challenge Program for at-risk youths? Do you see that being continued?**

*The Challenge Program has proven itself to be a program that adds value to our communities and to the state. It is certainly a program that we would like to continue, provided the budget will support it. Any decisions about budget cuts would be based upon their impact on the readiness of our military personnel and the support of our veterans.*

**8. What are your thoughts on the department's tuition reimbursement program? Has that program met your expectations?**

*The department's tuition reimbursement program has been a key element of our ability to recruit and retain talented young men and women. Our overall personnel strength figures have risen dramatically since we started this program in 1999. The Air Guard strength was at 86% in September of 1999 and is now at 99%. The Army Guard was at 91% and is now at 99%. On average, approximately 1800 young men and women participate in the program throughout the academic year. This program has now allowed us to compete with surrounding states that offer 100% tuition free grants. Tuition reimbursement has not only supported our readiness, but it has also added great value to our communities by giving many of our young people the opportunity to continue their education while they serve their country and learn new skills. This is certainly a key and essential funding priority.*